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JOURNAL
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SOUTH CENTRAL JURISDICTION
 ONE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIFTH SESSION

(Thirty-Second Since Unification)
 held at

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GEORGE WALTON DAMERON



At the age of 80, George Dameron departed this life, and as was said about Lincoln, he left a lonesome place against the sky.

George did not serve as long as some, because he was later than many to enter the professional ministry. He was second to none, however, in the quality of his ministry and of his spirit. One word describes him best of all, "Genuine." George was genuine. There was nothing phony about this man. His life was a Stewardship, and he felt he owed his best every waking hour. He was not fussy nor peevish, yet he had little patience or time for littleness and half-heartedness.

His Ministry was marked by several important things. He served for many years as Executive Secretary of the Board of Education. He gave this position much of the character which stayed with it down the years. He also made such a contribution to the Pineville Church that it became an entirely different type of Church after his Ministry there. But George was ahead of his time. Movements which are now very much accepted by the Church were embraced by him. He was far ahead of his day in the realm of race, and the same can be said of the Ecumenical movement. It was appropriate that a Catholic Priest should have a part in his funeral, and the Negro Ministers of his area should attend.

He kept abreast of events even after retirement. He attended all of the important meetings of the Church, and took notes on lectures as if he had to preach next Sunday. His son found a book by Tillich marked upon his desk as one of the last things he had read. Not many retired ministers are still reading Paul Tillich. This was George Dameron. A wonderful friend, a great soul. . .

"I know not what the future holds of marvel or surprise
Assured alone that life and death, his mercy underlies.
I know not where his islands lift their fringed palms in air. . .
I only know I cannot drift beyond His love and care. . ."

This I believe about my friend George Dameron. . .

Jolly B. Harper

WILLIAM LAFAYETTE DOSS, JR., D.D.

When William Lafayette Doss, Jr., slipped quietly away from us during the night of the thirty-first of March, 1970, we thought of the word of David which he spoke concerning Abner, "Do you not know that a great man has fallen this day in Israel?" When a giant oak falls, it always leaves an open space in the forest. It was so in the Louisiana Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church when Doctor Doss left us for his heavenly home.

William Lafayette Doss, Jr., was born on February 25, 1881 in Morehouse Parish, Louisiana, near where the town of Collinston is now located. He was the son of William Lafayette Doss and his wife Jennie Keller Doss. The early years of his life were spent on a cotton plantation in a part of the parish where, because of the scarcity of children, there were no public schools. His mother taught him in the beginning, and then he went to schools at Gum Ridge and Oak Ridge by boarding in the homes of the community from Monday through Friday. What High School education he got was from schools in Southwest Louisiana. His father moved to Gueydan, Louisiana, in the early part of 1897 and established the first merchantile business in that

community. The High School principal there coached him for entrance examinations to Centenary College which he entered in the fall of 1899. He was graduated by Centenary College in 1903 with an A.B. degree. In the fall of the same year, he entered the School of Theology of Vanderbilt University from which he graduated with a B.D. degree in 1906.

During a revival in Crowley in 1896, he was converted and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in that place. It was while he was attending Centenary College that he decided that the ministry was to be his life's work. He was licensed at the Crowley District Conference in 1904, and from that date until his death sixty-six years later, he was a faithful minister of the Methodist Church. All of his ministry was spent in the Louisiana Conference and he served with distinction the following charges: Patterson, 1907, Jeanerette 1908, Rayne 1909-11, Epworth of New Orleans 1912-15, Dubach 1916, Homer 1917-20, Alexandria District 1921-23, Carrollton Avenue of New Orleans 1924-25, Lake Charles District 1926-28, New Orleans District 1929-32, Ruston District 1933-34, Homer 1935, Lake Charles, First Church 1936-38, Monroe District 1939-41, Baton Rouge District 1942-44, Haynesville 1945-47, Bunkie 1948-53, and as a retired supply, he served the Boyce charge for three years, bringing to a close fifty years of service in the Louisiana Annual Conference.

During the years in which Dr. Doss served the Louisiana Conference many changes took place. Some serious controversies arose and feelings ran high, but Dr. Doss was always a steadying influence. He had positive beliefs about every issue. He never tried to straddle the fence in any controversy no matter how difficult it was. All you had to do was to find the right side of any question and there stood Dr. Doss. His sincerity, his integrity, and his influence helped the Conference over many difficult situations.

At the close of his first year in the ministry, he married Miss Mabel Lee of Jackson, Louisiana, who was his helpful partner for a bit over twenty eight years. To this marriage was born one son, Dr. Keller Doss of Fort Worth, Texas. Mrs. Doss died in 1935. While pastor of the First Methodist Church of Lake Charles, he was married to Mrs. Lucille Garrett of Homer, Louisiana, who survives him.

Although Dr. Doss was not an eloquent preacher, he was a careful sermonizer and an excellent interpreter of God's Word. He devoted many hours of hard study in preparation for preaching, and this study showed in the helpful messages that he brought. Even though a majority of his ministry was spent in executive positions, he excelled as a pastor. He cared for his people. He never left a home without leaving behind comfort, courage, and a witness for his Master. His counsel was sought by the lowly and the great among his ministerial friends. He never offered advice but when he gave it, at the request of a friend, it was always sound and practical. Leaders of the Church often went to him with difficult problems, and he never disappointed them by the solution which he offered. He knew the law of this Church as few men did. He was a tower of strength in any assembly. His genuineness was recognized by everyone.

During the forty six and a half years Dr. Doss served as an active member of the Louisiana Annual Conference, he held membership on nearly every important committee and commission of the Conference. Because of his deep concern for the under-paid preacher in the Conference, he pioneered in the establishment of the Minimum Salary Commission, which has been so helpful to under-paid preachers during all these years. He was President of the Board of Trustees of the Conference from the time of its organization until the time of his superannuation. Without ever seeking an appointment, he was called upon to serve six of the seven Districts of the Conference which existed during his active ministry. He was truly a great man. He was great in his humility, great in his sincerity, great in his friendships and great in his faith. "He so loved that when his summons came to join that innumerable caravan that moves to that pale realm of shade where each shall take his chamber in the silent halls of death. He did not go as a quarry-slave at night, scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust, he approached his grave as one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him and lies down to peaceful dreams". And so he did.